

# A Survey on Classroom Questioning in Junior High School English Reading Teaching

Yudan Zhang

School of Foreign Languages, Sichuan Normal University, Sichuan, 610101, China.

## Abstract

Classroom questioning is an important means for teachers to train students' thinking and comprehension ability, and it is also the link between teachers and students in the classroom. Classroom questioning is the main channel for teachers to output and transmit information and obtain teaching feedback information. Classroom questioning largely determines the nature and results of classroom teaching, and good classroom questioning can effectively stimulate students' innovative and pioneering thinking. Therefore, in order to investigate the application of classroom questioning in junior high school English reading teaching, this study will adopt mixed research methods. Among them, questionnaire, classroom observation and interview will be adopted in this study. This paper will explore the influence of classroom questioning on English reading teaching.

## Keywords

Junior Middle School English, Reading Teaching, Classroom Questioning.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Purpose of the Study

A class time consists of teacher speech time and student speech time. Among them, the classroom questioning part of teachers' speech time plays a decisive role. So classroom questioning is the most common teaching means in classroom teaching. By asking questions in class, teachers can constantly attract students' attention, so that students can actively participate in teaching activities. The master of English class should be students, so teachers should try to make students actively participate in the class. By asking questions in class, teachers can also stimulate students' learning enthusiasm. It also allows teachers to know how well students have mastered knowledge. Teachers can adjust their teaching by asking questions to see how students respond. And in junior high school English teaching, reading teaching occupies most of the time and content of English teaching. Therefore, in the process of learning English, reading classroom is an important source for students to master English language knowledge and skills. Therefore, it is very important for teachers to ask questions in junior middle school English reading class. So junior high school English classroom teacher questioning refers to the teacher in English classroom teaching according to certain teaching objectives and requirements, aiming at certain reading content to set up relevant questions. The teacher sets a series of questions to arouse students' thinking. It is hoped to improve students' English language ability and improve their thinking quality.

### 1.2. Background of the Study

#### 1.2.1. Reading Teaching

Reading teaching plays an important role in English language teaching. Among the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, reading plays an important role in English learning. Through reading class, teachers can cultivate students' reading ability. Teachers can transfer

knowledge to students and cultivate students' thinking ability, speaking ability and communicative ability. From the aspect of improving students' personal cultivation, reading teaching can accumulate students' language knowledge. It can also improve their thinking qualities, such as critical thinking and innovative thinking. In addition, reading teaching can transfer certain cultural knowledge to students, so as to improve their learning ability. From the perspective of examination, reading comprehension also accounts for most scores in the high school entrance examination or college entrance examination. Therefore, English reading teaching is an important part of English teaching that cannot be ignored.

### **1.2.2. Classroom Questioning**

Effective classroom questioning can exercise students' thinking and attract students' attention. Only in this way can knowledge be effectively input and output. And students can think more deeply according to the teacher's questions. In this way, students can focus on the problem and conduct independent study and exploration. It can be seen that teachers' classroom questioning has a great impact on English class. Therefore, as high school English teachers in the new era, teachers themselves should pay attention to their own way of questioning. In addition, the classroom questioning techniques are optimized so as to continuously improve the effectiveness and pertinence of classroom questions. Therefore, English teachers should fully realize the importance of classroom questioning in English teaching. By asking questions in class, teachers can not only stimulate students' interest in learning. They can also ask questions to evaluate students in time and control the teaching progress. By asking questions, teachers can create a platform for students to express themselves. By answering the questions, students can constantly exercise their oral English ability and constantly train their thinking ability.

### **1.2.3. The Importance of Classroom Questioning in Reading Teaching**

Reading is the process of information processing and processing of textbook knowledge. Therefore, reading teaching plays an important role in middle school English teaching. And asking questions is one of the means often used in English classroom teaching. If teachers can in the process of English reading teaching, skillfully use questions to guide students to learn. This can not only promote students' learning, but also promote teachers' teaching. Whether the English teacher's expression of the problem is clear and whether the setting of the problem is reasonable. As well as teachers' own understanding of knowledge, both affect students' learning. Therefore, in order to promote efficient classroom, teachers should consciously improve their ability to design questions. Good classroom questioning in reading class can motivate students to read. And by asking questions in class, students can form reading expectations and inspire reading associations. The most important thing is that through the teacher's own questions, students can perceive the focus of learning and clear the context of reading. It can be seen that teachers' questioning is very important in English reading teaching.

## **1.3. Theoretical Framework of the Study**

Constructivism is a theory of knowledge and learning which emphasizes learner initiative. It also holds that learning is a process of generating meaning and constructing understanding based on the original knowledge experience. Constructivism emphasizes the active constructivism, social interaction and situational characteristics of learning. The constructivist view of learning emphasizes that students' learning is a process of actively constructing knowledge. Knowledge is acquired through active construction rather than direct transmission. Knowledge construction takes place on the basis of learners' original knowledge and experience. Learners' personal experience of things and active exploration take place in a certain situation. Therefore, constructivism believes that knowledge is not acquired by teachers. But in a certain context, in the interaction with others through meaning construction. Constructivism also holds that learners acquire knowledge with the help of others under

certain circumstances. For example, the cooperation and communication between people are obtained through the construction of meaning.

According to the constructivism theory, students acquire knowledge by constructing it on the basis of their own original knowledge. Then their original knowledge and life experience is the foundation. However, students still need to construct in a certain situation and in the interaction of others. Students can interact with their classmates and teachers by asking questions. Under certain circumstances, for example, learning based on a certain text in reading class. In the course of English reading teaching, reading texts provide background knowledge and information for teachers and students. It enables teachers and students to carry out deep learning based on discourse. Therefore, students will continue to build their own knowledge by communicating with others in a certain context. Therefore, English teachers should study constructivism and other teaching theories in depth. So that in the class can be targeted. And when theory and practice are combined, it is easier to find the problems in the teaching process. So as to better improve the teaching, to build efficient English reading teaching classroom.

#### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

Since reading teaching occupies an important part in English classroom teaching. Moreover, teachers' classroom questioning has a profound influence on the teaching effect of the whole English class. Therefore, classroom questioning determines the effect of classroom teaching to a large extent. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the current situation of teachers' classroom questioning in junior high school English reading teaching. By observing the way teachers ask questions in class, we can help teachers find the problems existing in classroom questioning. Then the in-depth analysis of the reasons, so as to put forward suggestions and improvement plans.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Questions**

In order to understand the current situation of junior high school English reading teachers' classroom questioning. In this process, the existing problems and advantages are found to put forward suggestions for optimization and improvement. The research problems of this paper have two points. The first question is what is the status quo of teachers' classroom questioning in junior high school English reading teaching? For example, it starts from the way teachers ask questions, the depth of questions and the way of expression. The second question is how to improve and optimize teachers' classroom questioning in junior high school English reading teaching?

### **2.2. Participants**

This paper selects three English teachers from a middle school in Ya'an, Sichuan Province as the research objects. The three English teachers are teaching grade two. And the classes taught by the three teachers are of the same level. Therefore, the objectivity and fairness of the investigation are guaranteed. This study will analyze three reading lessons of three English teachers.

### **2.3. Research Methods**

In order to understand the current situation of teachers' questioning in junior middle school English reading teaching, this study will adopt three research tools: classroom observation, questionnaire and teacher interview.

The author spent a week, to a middle school in Ya'an City for a week of listening records. We chose three reading lessons from three English teachers. This study conducted classroom observation without informing English teachers of the purpose of the study. And fill in the

classroom observation scale in the process of observation. The classroom observation scale consists of basic information, classroom observation items and quantity. The classroom observation project also includes the types, ways and techniques of teachers' questioning.

Because the sample size of this study is small, it is accidental and one-sided. And because classroom observation can only find the appearance of classroom questioning. Therefore, in order to deeply understand the deep-seated reasons behind teachers' questions in English reading teaching, interviews are conducted. The author will interview three English teachers after class. Then the relevant information is collated and analyzed. The interview involves four questions. The first question is the teacher's basic views and views on the classroom questions. The second question is what kind of questions do teachers tend to use? For example, whether to ask questions in group or by name. The third question is how do teachers deal with students' reactions after asking questions in class. The final issue is to ask teachers to do self-assessment. Please tell me the problems or advantages in the questioning process.

In order to fully understand the current situation of English reading teaching teachers' questioning, it is not enough to only observe and interview teachers. We should also analyze from the level of students. In this way, students' expectations of teachers' questions and opinions on classroom questions can be understood. Only in this way can we see whether students can understand the teacher's questions in class or learn efficiently through questions. Therefore, the author conducted a questionnaire survey on the students in three classes of Grade two. There are 12 single-choice questions in the questionnaire. And each multiple choice question is designed according to likert is 5 level scale. Students can choose five answers to each question. The specific content of the questionnaire survey includes reading the question object and the question discourse asked by the teacher in class. It also includes the applicability of teachers' questions and students' understanding of questions.

#### **2.4. Data Analysis**

Classroom observation is a natural and objective research activity. Teachers can find problems in classroom teaching through classroom observation. So as to self-reflection and self-improvement. Through the analysis of classroom observation scale after class, there are the following findings. From the point of view of the types of teachers' questions, the three teachers' questions were all focused on display questions. In this way, teachers can easily check whether students have mastered the language knowledge in the book. But this is not good for students' deep thinking and independent thinking as well as their thinking development. Therefore, teachers should raise more reference questions about the depth of the article when asking questions in class. Teachers should also ask questions that promote independent thinking. In order to explore the underlying reasons, interviews with teachers were conducted. The reason why the three teachers focus on the presentation questions is to consider the limited class time and to promote students to better grasp the textbook knowledge. In addition, the teacher thinks that the classroom tasks are heavy and the students have a general foundation, so the problem stays at a shallow level.

In English reading teaching class, from the point of view of the subject of questions, teachers generally ask students questions. Students seldom take the initiative to ask teachers questions. A small number of students are active in class and like to communicate with teachers. Under normal circumstances, students take the initiative to ask questions to teachers generally after class. In fact, it can be seen from here that students regard reading articles as language learning materials. The content and meaning of the article itself is not very important. Therefore, teachers can convey to students a point of view that communication and discussion in class are very important and conducive to the development of students' deep thinking. According to the acquisition of constructivism knowledge, students constantly actively construct it. Therefore, it is very important to cultivate students' ability to ask questions actively.

Among the three English teachers in this study, there are both young teachers and mature teachers. Then from the tone of voice, each teacher has a different performance. But by and large, the average young teacher is enthusiastic and loud in class. In addition, when teachers ask questions in class, most young teachers will encourage students. Mature teachers, on the other hand, did not show much fluctuation in mood. Their tone is more prosaic. When teachers are energetic, they inspire passion and interest in the subject. In this way, the whole class is carried out tightly under the leadership of the teacher. Mature teachers, however, believe that the main task of class is to transfer knowledge to students. A large fluctuation of feelings will affect students' learning. Therefore, the tone the teacher chooses in class is completely decided by the individual. However, the author still believes that teachers should be full of emotions in class, which will promote the improvement of classroom effect.

In order to understand students' opinions on teachers' questioning methods in English reading class, a questionnaire survey was conducted among students in three classes. After sorting out and analyzing the results of the questionnaire survey, the following findings can be found. All the students in the three classes thought that the selection of the question objects by the teacher was evenly distributed. That is to say, the three English teachers will take care of both the better students and the worse students. There is almost no such thing as asking questions only to students with good grades. According to the results of the questionnaire survey, it is also found that teachers will distinguish the difficulty and ease of classroom questioning. In addition, teachers will answer questions according to the actual level of students when choosing the object of question. However, some results show that teachers have personal preferences, such as asking questions to their favorite students several times. Therefore, teachers must pay attention to educational equity. Let every student have the opportunity to participate in the classroom teaching communication and interaction.

### **3. Conclusion**

#### **3.1. Implications of the Study**

In order to investigate the current situation of classroom questioning of English reading teachers, the author conducted an investigation and analysis through classroom questioning, interview and questionnaire. The following conclusions are drawn through classroom observations in class and interviews with teachers after class. Teachers' questioning needs to be improved. According to classroom observation, it is found that teachers tend to ask reference questions. This is not conducive to the development of students' thinking and exploration. Moreover, according to the results of the questionnaire survey, students hope that teachers can ask more open questions to promote their thinking. And most classroom questions are asked by teachers to students. Therefore, teachers can encourage students to take the initiative to ask questions in class, and take the initiative to ask students what questions they can put forward immediately. Moreover, through observing the reading class of three teachers, it is found that teachers with full mood enjoy better reading class atmosphere. And when teachers ask questions and students can't answer them. It is common for teachers to change the answer to another student or just say the answer. This could actually be improved. Teachers can guide students or give them some hints and clues to solve problems independently. This will not only develop students' ability to solve problems, but also allow students to actively participate in the class.

#### **3.2. Research Limitations**

First of all, the sample size of the author's classroom observation is small. Only three reading lessons of three teachers were observed. So there are great limitations and one-sidedness. Secondly, the object of the questionnaire survey is also small, only three classes of students.

Moreover, my theoretical basis and theoretical literacy are not high enough. The process of interviewing teachers is highly subjective. These are the areas where the author can improve. And the study of classroom questioning is of great significance to English teaching. Therefore, if there is an opportunity to continue the research in the future, improvements can be made from the above aspects.

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